OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN --- DELIVER US FROM EVIL

AN ESSAY BY

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February 2026

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OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN --- DELIVER US FROM EVIL
The Lord's Prayer, Mt 6:9-13.

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 2759-2854
2761 *The Lord's Prayer "is truly the summary of the whole gospel." At the Center of the Scriptures.*
2763 *The Lord's Prayer is the most perfect of prayers*

"BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL"
2850 *"I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one."*
2851 *In this petition, evil is not an abstraction, but refers to a person, Satan, the Evil One, the angel who opposes God.*
2852 *"A murderer from the beginning --- a liar and the father of lies." Satan is "the deceiver of the whole world."*
2854 *When we ask to be delivered from the Evil One, we pray as well to be freed from all evils, present, past, and future, of which he* (the Evil One) *is the author or instigator*.

THE FALL OF THE ANGELS
391 *Scripture and the Church's Tradition see in this being a fallen angel, called "Satan" or the "devil."*
392 *This "fall" consists in the free choice of these created spirits, who radically and irrevocably rejected God and his reign. --- The Devil "has sinned from the beginning"; he is "a liar and the father of lies."*

Evil – *profound immorality and wickedness, especially when regarded as a supernatural force*. (internet)

Recognizing the Enemy
In the Christian faith, recognizing the enemy is a crucial aspect of spiritual discernment and warfare. The Bible provides guidance on identifying and understanding the nature of the enemy, primarily represented by Satan and his forces, as well as the manifestations of evil in the world. Satan, also known as the devil, is depicted as the primary adversary of God and His people. The Bible describes him as a deceiver and accuser. In 1 Peter 5:8, believers are warned: "Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." This imagery emphasizes the danger and cunning nature of Satan, who actively seeks to lead believers astray.
https://www.bing.com/search?q=how+do+we+recognise+evil+in+the+world&qs=SC&pq=how+do+we+recognize+evil&sc=1-24&cvid=5FFCDF55D5274F55A771E0779FB80CEE&FORM=QBRE&sp=1&ghc=1&lq=0

The Mystery of Evil
How do we confront various forms of evil in the world, in others, and in ourselves?
https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/finding-the-way/202601/the-mystery-of-evil?msockid=3560be0854526f0035a4ab9e55e86e9b

Key points
- *Acts are evil, but people are not.*

- *Evil exists in corporate, political, and religious entities that perpetuate injustice, abuse, greed, and war.*
- *Responses to evil include passivity, violent resistance, or nonviolent resistance.*

We open our discussion with a powerful statement from Father Pedro Arrupe, S. J., former head of the Jesuit order, in his 1973 Address to Graduates of Jesuit Schools in Europe:

> *"It is easy to be good in a good world. What is difficult is to be good in an evil world, where the egoism of others and the egoism built into the institutions of society attack us and threaten to annihilate us. Under such conditions, the only possible reaction would seem to be to oppose evil with evil, egoism with egoism, hate with hate; in short, to annihilate the aggressor with his own weapons. But is it not precisely thus that evil conquers us most thoroughly? For then, not only does it damage us exteriorly, it perverts our very heart. Evil is overcome only by good, hate by love, egoism by generosity. It is thus that we must sow justice in our world. To be just, it is not enough to refrain from injustice. One must go further and refuse to play its game, substituting love for self-interest as the driving force of society."*

All the above seems pretty straight forward and understandable. Why then are we not all taught how to recognize evil when it's openly visible in our everyday world?

I'm a practicing Catholic for over 70 years and have studied Church teaching quite a bit (as you can see from above). I attended religious education classes through my childhood years and at Seattle University (Jesuit) in my college years. I've attended thousands of Masses and many other functions that addressed teachings of my faith. And I've studied my faith significantly over the last 20 years as I write articles and books about it. Yet I can only recall a very few times when the Church taught me about evil, including one sermon last year. We're taught about sin, of course, but not about the underlying principle of evil.

And it seems from centuries of history and current events of the last few years that the Church itself hasn't recognized evil when it seems pretty obvious to me.

My most notable reflection on that is the Discovery Doctrine which I've studied and written about. That Papal doctrine in 1492 and reinforced in 1493 gave the Church's official approval of imperial colonialism around the world and celebrated its achievements. You can say that was for the God-given directive to go out and convert the world to Christianity, while it committed all kinds of crimes against humanity. And this went on for over 500 hundred years. On March 30, 2023, Pope Francis repudiated the "Doctrine of Discovery":
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery_doctrine

Another related example is the role of the Church and many other religious institutions in Indigenous Boarding Schools where indigenous children were abducted from their families and physically placed in schools for the purpose of destroying their indigenous culture and replacing it with the white Christian culture. This went on for decades in the US, Canada and other countries before it was also repudiated by Pope Francis and the Church.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Indian_boarding_schools

And perhaps the most notorious example is the sexual abuse scandal around the world. I won't even discuss that one.

That brings me to today's environment in our country and around the world. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The World Trade Center was demolished by al-Qaeda on September 11, 2011. The invasion of Ukraine on February 22, 2022, and the ongoing war against its people by Russia. The Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, and the ongoing war in Gaza. School shootings. Massacres. And so, on and on and on.

And that brings me to today and why I'm so upset.

By all definitions – lies and fabrications, corruption, greed, inhumane treatment of immigrants, the murder to innocent people by government agents, etc., by the current administration throughout its branches is evil.

Every day, we ask God to deliver us from evil yet many of the population agree with the administration – they are the good guys fighting against those they perceive as evil (Democrats and immigrants). Just listen to the government's response to all that's happening, especially from the Catholic Vice-President and the Catholic Secretary of State.

More so, this administration was put in place by Christians who didn't recognize the evil they voted for.

Just before the elections in 2024, Pope Francis told the American people that they had a choice between two evils, and his advice was to choose the lesser of the two evils. Subsequently, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops sent out a letter to all parishes in the US appealing to Catholic voters to oppose abortion as the greater evil without directly endorsing the Republican candidate, but it was clearly their purpose. I have a copy of that letter, and I replied with my objection to both the USCCB and my Archbishop.

Subsequently, 55% of Catholics voted Republican and made up 22% of the total vote. https://www.ewtnnews.com/world/us/new-pew-study-reveals-percentage-of-catholics-who-voted-for-trump-in-2024

And 72% of white Christians voted Republican. https://prri.org/spotlight/religion-and-the-2024-presidential-election/

Where does it stop? *In a recent interview with The New York Times, Trump suggested that only he decides when international law applies to his actions. When asked whether there were any "limits on his global powers," he replied, "Yeah, there is one thing. My own morality. My own mind. It's the only thing that can stop me."* https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/trump-says-there-s-only-one-limit-on-his-global-power/ar-AA1V1Jdy

Maybe the reason is also included in the Lord's Prayer – "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." They seem to believe and act as though they are doing God's will without seeing the evil in their work. And that brings us back to Satan who has flipped the script – what they are doing is good, not evil. People don't really choose to do evil; they do so because Satan has them convinced it's good. And they still don't recognize it.

Millions of people around the world are suffering unjustly from it. That’s what bothers me most.